



For Immediate Release

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Monday November 13, 2006

***ENZI ANNOUNCES WITNESSES FOR HEARING, BUILDING 21st
CENTURY FDA; HEARING WILL HIGHLIGHT BIPARTISAN
WORK ETHIC VOTERS ENDORSED AT POLLS***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, announcing the slate of witnesses for Thursday's hearing, "Building a 21st Century FDA: Proposals to Improve Drug Safety and Innovation," today said the hearing reflects the Committee's commitment to push ahead legislation produced in the bipartisan, consensus-building manner endorsed by the voters last week.

"Thursday's hearing will focus our attention on issues and legislation Senator Kennedy and I have worked together on for nearly two years – namely building an FDA that will provide the public greater safety by requiring drug makers to engage in better planning before a drug is approved for release and by helping patients and health care providers make better informed decisions on treatment through greater access to clinical trials information," Enzi said.

Enzi and Kennedy, the Committee's Ranking Member, have spent nearly two years developing a bill, S.3807, the "Enhancing Drug Safety and Innovation Act," which will raise the bar to ensure that drug safety is not an afterthought, but an integral part of the process from the beginning to help restore public confidence in the FDA's review process and to better weigh the benefits and risks of prescription drugs.

"Stakeholders from all sides of the issue have had a say in the drafting of this important reform legislation," Enzi noted. "Bipartisan bills require hard work and patience. Senator Kennedy and I both worked to ensure that this bill walks the walk to provide a bipartisan solution that delivers genuine reform."

"Years ago in the Wyoming Legislature, I established what I call the '80 percent rule,' realizing that everyone can agree on 80 percent of the issues, but will probably never agree on the other 20 percent. Senator Kennedy and I have applied that rule to the HELP Committee over the past two years and have proved how much we can accomplish when we work to find that 80 percent," Enzi added. "I am confident our

work ethic, based upon that 80 percent rule will not end when Senator Kennedy takes the gavel next year.”

Witnesses for Thursday’s hearing, scheduled for 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, include:

Panel I

Ms. Sheila Burke, Co-Chair, Committee on the Assessment of the U.S. Drug Safety System, Institute of Medicine, Washington, DC.

Panel II

Ms. Diane Thompson, Vice President, Public Policy and Communications, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, Washington, DC.

Dr. Steven Nissen, Chairman, Department of Cardiovascular Medicine, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, OH.

Dr. Adrian Thomas, Vice President, Benefit-Risk Management, Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Group, Horsham, PA.

Mr. Jim Guest, President & CEO, Consumers Union, Yonkers, NY.

Mr. Greg Simon, President, FasterCures, Washington, DC.

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